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RMRS Rocky Mountain Remediation Services, L.L.C.
. . . protecting the environment

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 1, 1996

TO: L. E. Woods, Ecology and Wtshd. Management, Bldg. T130B, X3378

FROM: J. D. Krause, Ecology, Bldg. T893B, X3363

SUBJECT: B-5 POND WETLAND DISTURBANCE REPORT AND RESTORATION PLAN - JDK-002-96

DOE Order: 4700.1

Action: None

Attached is a report and restoration plan describing the incident that occurred on February 15, 1996 when a front-end loader got stuck in a wetland area above the B-5 Pond. The attached report gives details of the incident and describes the measures that will be used to restore the wetland. Photographs were taken showing the disturbance. Copies of those can be provided to you as soon as they are available.

The displaced soil was completely replaced on Wednesday, February 21, 1996 and restoration of part of the wetland was also completed on that day. Some areas were too wet to allow proper restoration. The remainder of the restoration will be completed as soon as the weather and soil conditions allow it.

Reidel's personnel were briefed on wetland issues and on other natural resource protection issues on Monday, February 26, 1996 at their Plan of the Day meeting. The need for pre-project surveys, how to avoid similar occurrences, and how to minimize damage in the unlikely event that there is a similar occurrence were discussed.

We will soon be forwarding an action plan to you that will address additional steps that will be taken to prevent similar occurrences from happening on the site in the future.

If you have any questions, please call me at X 3363, digital page 5331.

cc:
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ER Project File (2)

ADMIN RECCRD

BZ-A-000372

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B-5 POND WETLAND DISTURBANCE REPORT AND RESTORATION PLAN

On January 16, 1996, a requirement was identified by RMRS Sitewide Surface Water (SW) for a pipeline to be constructed in the Site Buffer Zone by Riedel-Smith Environmental Services, Inc. (RES), a subcontractor to RMRS. This pipeline will be used to divert water from interior pond A-3 to North Walnut Creek, thereby bypassing terminal pond A-4. This action is necessary to accommodate the project to install an upstream gate valve and water quality inlet in A-4 beginning February 29, 1996. In order to meet this aggressive schedule with very limited resources, a decision was made to obtain pipeline material by dismantling the existing pipeline running from terminal pond C-2 to B-5. This pipeline is no longer needed for water diversion due to completion of Woman Creek Reservoir. Because the C-2 to B-5 pipeline was constructed in 1991-1992 and heavy equipment was used in all phases of construction, an assumption was made that removal of a section of this pipeline would not cause concern. Therefore, on the afternoon of February 15 1996, a Komatsu front-end loader was dispatched by RES, under the direction of the SW subcontract representative, to remove a 700 foot section of pipeline. During the removal operation, the loader became entrapped in mud on a hillside in what was discovered to be a wetland. In the process of extracting the loader, further damage occurred. The loader was successfully extracted at 5:00 p.m. that day. The morning of February 16, RES and SW were notified of the violation by RMRS Environmental Operations and Ecology personnel.

The existence of the wetland was not apparent to the untrained observer prior to the event, and as such was not identified to SW as a concern by the RES project manager. In retrospect, SW should have requested and obtained a review by Ecology personnel prior to initiation of the removal operation.

Approximately 0.022 acres (962 square feet) of wetlands were temporarily affected by the incident. This includes the areas that were rutted and the areas where vegetation was temporarily covered with soil displaced by the loader.

Restoration of the impacted area will be accomplished by replacing the displaced soil using hand tools, being careful to minimize compaction, and to reestablish natural contours to restore original drainage patterns. Restoration of sheet flow drainage should limit impacts to the immediate area of the ruts. Downslope areas should not be significantly impacted once original drainage is reestablished and soil is stabilized. The areas of disturbed soil will be protected from erosion by crimping existing dead vegetation produced by previous years' growth (natural mulch) into the soil. This should hold the soil in place until vegetation can reestablish. A small amount of excelsior mulch may be added to areas that are very wet to add a temporary degradable structure to the soil. No straw or other mulch that could contain weed seeds will be used.

The soil probably has sufficient viable seeds, roots and rhizomes to allow rapid natural reestablishment of vegetation. Once the soil is stabilized, the area will be monitored weekly to evaluate erosion and natural reestablishment of vegetation. Seeding can be done if it is necessary. If an excessive number of weeds appear to be coming in, weed control measures such as wick application of a contact herbicide could be used. The area already has a significant number of Canada thistle, and regrowth of some of those is inevitable.